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ABSTRACT

Reported are the results of a survey of junior high and high school principals in North York, Ontario, concerning programs for gifted students. Returned were approximately 55% of the questionnaires containing 18 items covering such areas as identification of gifted and talented students, curriculum programs, follow-up programs, observation by teachers of other school programs, and budget allocations. Noted are results such as the following: teachers identify the gifted students in 56% of the responding schools, 22% of the schools use psychological consultation, and 19% of the principals have no plans for identification; 78% kept gifted students in mind when developing curriculum, but only 48% had a designated gifted program; 9% reported having a follow-up program; 40% of the teachers have the opportunity to observe other school programs; and 13% have specific budget allocations for gifted students. (IM)

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SURVEY OF SCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

Phil Cassidy

May, 1975

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As a result of a request made by the Association for Bright Children, a questionnaire was approved for distribution to principals of schools in all three panels in North York. It was felt that the information obtained from this survey would be of particular value to North York's Committee on the Gifted. Accordingly, the survey was distributed and the data analyzed by Educational Research Services.

RESPONSE RATE

Approximately 55% of the principals returned completed questionnaires. The response rate varied slightly from panel to panel, with some 53% of questionnaires returned at the junior high school level and 58% at the secondary level.

Question #1

What plan, if any, does your school have for identifying gifted and talented children?

Some 56% of the principals reported that talented and gifted children are identified by the classroom teacher's own observations and impressions. Slightly more than one-fifth (22%) used psychological testing or had a psychologist visit the school. Approximately 19% of the schools most of which were in the secondary panel, reported that they did not have any formal plans at the present for identifying gifted and talented children

Other Comments	No. of schools responding
a) Use of standardized testing	4
b) Consultation with feeder schools	4
c) Continual evaluation, mental age, chronological age	3
d) Student-teacher evaluation, communication	3

Question #2

Approximately one-third (35%) of the sample did not answer this question. Almost half (45%) of those who did complete the question felt that the term "gifted" should be defined.

The response pattern to this question varied greatly, from some 3% who thought that none of the children in their school were gifted to some 3% who thought that all of their children were gifted. A further 10% reported that only 1% of their school population were gifted and almost one-third (32%) indicated that the gifted made

up from 2-7% of the school population.

Question #3

List the criteria which your staff take into consideration when identifying gifted children.

One-third of the respondents (30%) indicated that academic ability and skills, especially math and reading were the major criteria used in identifying gifted children. One-quarter of the principals felt that the child's creativity was an important factor. Over one-fifth (22%) considered the particular talents of the individual in special areas (i.e. art, music) and a further fifth felt that the child's maturity, social, mental and physical development should be given consideration.

Other Comments	No.
a) Interest	10
b) Critical thinking skills, reasoning	10
c) Classroom performance, output	10
d) Achievement	9
e) Standardized test results	8
f) Above level reading skills	8

Question #4

Is there a specific plan for alerting teachers to the needs of individual pupils with intellectual or creative gifts?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
32%	65%	3%

Almost two-thirds of those who responded to this question indicated that there was no specific plan for alerting teachers to the needs of individual pupils with intellectual or creative gifts. Fewer than one-fifth (17%) of the schools in the secondary panel reported having specific plans in this area while two-fifths (40%) of the schools at the junior high level indicated that they had formulated such plans.

Question #5

Are the needs of the gifted kept in mind in developing curriculum programs, selecting books and other instructional materials, planning teacher assignments and assigning pupils to teachers and classes?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
78%	18%	4%

Over three-quarters (78%) of the principals answered positively to this question.

Question #6

Does your school have a designated program to specifically serve the needs of gifted students?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
48%	49%	3%

The response to this question was almost evenly split. The pattern did, however vary from panel to panel. Approximately three-fifths (60%) of the junior high principals indicated that they had a program to serve the needs of gifted students while only one-third (33%) of the secondary principals reported the existence of such a program.

Other Comments	No.
a) Independent study programs	10
b) Enrichment groups	9
c) Use of special resource teacher	9
d) Evening and weekend classes	1

Question #7

If not included in the previous question, does the school make it possible for gifted children to pursue areas of interest or talent by modifying individual programs to the extent necessary?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
82%	9%	9%

Over four-fifths of the respondents reported that the school does modify existing programs where necessary in order to make it possible for gifted students to pursue areas of interest or talent.

Question #8

Does the school have an individual or a committee on the lookout for ways in which the school program can better serve the gifted?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
37%	61%	2%

Approximately three-fifths of the principals report that they do not have such an individual. Here again, there was a wide range of responses among the three panels. Three-fifths of junior high principals indicated that they did have such an individual or committee while less than one-fifth (17%) of secondary principals indicated the existence of such a person or group.

Question #9

Is there an appraisal of the curriculum to determine the extent to which it serves the gifted?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
54%	40%	6%

Just over half (54%) of the principals report that they do appraise the curriculum in relation to its ability to serve the needs of the gifted.

Question #10

Are gifted students given regular opportunities to work with other students of like abilities and interests?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
76%	18%	6%

Three-quarters of the principals indicated that gifted students are indeed given the opportunity to work with other students of similar interests.

Question #11

Does the school have a specific program for directing gifted students to out of school opportunities for pursuit of intellectual and creative interests?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
23 %	72%	5%

Very few schools seem to have a specific program for directing gifted students to out of school opportunities. This pattern was generally prevalent throughout the three panels.

Question #12

Does someone in the school have the specific responsibility of following up gifted or talented pupils who have gone on to higher grades?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
9%	88%	3%

Very few principals report that anyone has the specific responsibility of following up gifted or talented pupils who have gone on to higher grades. Within the 9%

who responded positively to this statement, five of the principals reported that they themselves held this responsibility. Other people involved were teachers, resource librarians, guidance counsellors and psychological services personnel.

Question #13

Are parents or resource people with particular intellectual, artistic, scientific, social or technological capabilities asked to work with individual pupils or groups of gifted pupils?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
41%	58%	1%

Approximately two-fifths (41%) of the respondents indicate that they utilize parents or resource people with particular talents.

Question #14

Do teachers have an opportunity to observe in other schools which have programs for the education of gifted pupils?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
40%	52%	8%

Less than half (40%) of the teachers have an opportunity to observe in other schools which have programs for gifted pupils.

Other Comments	No.
a) Have not done so as yet but if they request it, they can go	6
b) A number of days were given to the school for P.A. which could involve these visits	1

Question #15

Are specific school meetings planned to consider problems related to the identification, guidance, teaching and motivation of the gifted?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
28%	70%	2%

Over two-thirds (70%) of the principals report that they do not hold specific meetings to consider such problems.

Question #16

Are there specific budget allocations to be used for materials, decreased pupil-teacher ratios, field trips, etc. for gifted pupils?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
13%	80%	7%

Four-fifths (80%) of the principals report that they do not have budget allocations for the above designated purposes.

Other Comments	No.
a) Receive funds from within school or family of schools budget	9
b) No specific budget but funds available when needed	1
c) Budget or request for special needs	1

Question #17

Does the school practice any form of acceleration?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
52%	42%	6%

Over half (52%) of the principals report that their schools practice some form of acceleration. The junior high and secondary panels indicated the greatest use of acceleration.

Question #18

Do your gifted students have access to any enrichment programs in a Family of Schools basis or wider basis?

YES	NO	NO RESPONSE
43%	55%	2%

More than half (55%) of the schools report that they do not have access to any enrichment programs.

Within the 43% who indicated that their gifted students do have access to enrichment programs, the following comments were made.

	No.
-"Gifted" resource teacher works in the family of schools and is great	6
-Saturday morning visual arts program	4
-Visits to the junior high to use the library, science, drama facilities	3
-Seneca College, Saturday morning classes	2

	No.
-Students from secondary schools assist	2
-Don Mills family run extensive programs for gifted children	2
-Talented pupils in music are given opportunities to join musical groups or attend concerts	1